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## SENATE RESOLUTION

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ACKNOWLEDGING THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE TARO SECURITY AND  
PURITY TASK FORCE AND SUPPORTING THE REFORMATION OF THE  
TASK FORCE AS A LEGISLATIVELY ENABLED BODY, SHOULD THE TARO  
FARMING COMMUNITY DETERMINE THE NEED TO DO SO.

1 WHEREAS, from the sacred union of Papa and Wākea came  
2 Hāloanakalaukapalili, the kalo, the progenitor and elder brother  
3 to Hawaiians, and Hāloa, the first man, who together represent  
4 the ties binding heaven and earth; and  
5

6 WHEREAS, kalo was the initial source of substantial  
7 nutrition for the early Hawaiians without which the early people  
8 of Hawaii could not have thrived and possibly not have survived  
9 as a population in Ka Pae 'Āina; and  
10

11 WHEREAS, the kinship story of Hāloa and  
12 Hāloanakalaukapalili binds the descendants of Hāloa in a  
13 reciprocal relationship of kuleana of malama 'āina; and  
14

15 WHEREAS, no other Hawaiian staple crop, including 'uala,  
16 mai'a or 'ulu, is considered as sacred as kalo to the people of  
17 Hawaii; and  
18

19 WHEREAS, kalo supported and elevated everyday inter-  
20 personal relationships among the early people and their  
21 spiritual connections to the islands; and  
22

23 WHEREAS, kalo is further esteemed as a primary food source  
24 that continues to provide substantial nutritional value; and  
25

26 WHEREAS, protection of Hawaiian culture, history, and  
27 spirituality are reflected in the protection of kalo and the  
28 specific agricultural systems in which kalo is grown throughout  
29 the islands; and  
30

31 WHEREAS, the reciprocal relationship between kalo farms and  
32 communities across the Hawaiian islands continues to improve



1 social and familial bonds, intellectual achievements, cultural  
2 connections, and emotional and physical health of state  
3 residents; and  
4

5 WHEREAS, by the arrival of the first Europeans in 1778,  
6 Hawaiians had developed one of the most advanced systems of wet  
7 and dry kalo cultivation in the Pacific, feeding a population of  
8 more than three hundred thousand; and  
9

10 WHEREAS, the number of acres under wetland kalo production  
11 islandwide has fallen dramatically from some thirty thousand  
12 acres in 1850 to approximately five hundred acres today; and  
13

14 WHEREAS, kalo became the state plant in 2008 in honor of  
15 the cultural, historic, and agricultural significance of kalo to  
16 Hawaii and its people; and  
17

18 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force was  
19 created by Act 211, Session Laws of Hawaii 2008, to guide policy  
20 and research kalo and kalo farming as well as to support the  
21 vitality, economic viability, and perpetuation of kalo and kalo  
22 farming in Hawaii; and  
23

24 WHEREAS, the Governor's 2010 comprehensive plan "A New Day  
25 in Hawaii" called for an "agricultural renaissance" to improve  
26 food security, boost local jobs and revenue, and decrease  
27 dependence on importation; and  
28

29 WHEREAS, Hawaii imports approximately two million pounds of  
30 kalo annually from China, Mexico, and other Pacific islands; and  
31

32 WHEREAS, Hawaii is subject to frequent and chronic  
33 shortages of kalo, lu'au leaf, and poi, particularly following  
34 natural disasters, due to insufficient commercial supply and  
35 insufficient kalo production; and  
36

37 WHEREAS, the importation of kalo presents a high risk of  
38 invasive pest introduction and diseases capable of threatening  
39 kalo cultivation and reduces opportunities for numerous young  
40 kalo growers to drive local kalo production and naturally reduce  
41 state dependency on kalo importation; and  
42



1 WHEREAS, in 2013, the Department of Agriculture identified  
2 the lack of locally grown, staple starch crops as the most  
3 pressing concern for Hawaii's food security; and  
4

5 WHEREAS, kalo, as one of the highest yielding starch crops  
6 per acre in Hawaii, is a key factor in addressing this need for  
7 local staple starch production, along with other Hawaiian food  
8 crops; and  
9

10 WHEREAS, even the lowest sea level rise estimates indicate  
11 the likelihood of inundation of unsuitable, brackish water in  
12 lowland areas that produce the bulk of locally grown kalo,  
13 including Hanalei, Kauai; Keanae-Wailuanui, Maui; Hālawā,  
14 Molokai; and Waipio, Hawaii Island; and  
15

16 WHEREAS, the production and consumption of kalo and poi  
17 significantly factor into a healthy Hawaiian diet and overall  
18 healthy lifestyle of the state population; and  
19

20 WHEREAS, community-wide practices involving healthy diets  
21 and lifestyles lead to the reduction of diabetes and heart  
22 disease within the State, which in turn leads to reduced demands  
23 on the state healthcare system; and  
24

25 WHEREAS, despite the many benefits of kalo and its  
26 significance in Hawaii, the amount of kalo produced and kalo-  
27 growing lands available in each ahupua'a continue to limit  
28 capacity for change due to existing shortages of available  
29 lands; and  
30

31 WHEREAS, perpetuating and expanding kalo production in  
32 Hawaii contribute to resilient communities and an overall policy  
33 of "pono economics"; and  
34

35 WHEREAS, the "pono economics" policy seeks to:  
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- 37 (1) Implement economic initiatives reflecting and  
38 reinforcing traditional Hawaiian values;  
39  
40 (2) Repair ecological balance to achieve social balance;  
41 and  
42



1 (3) Protect the rights and interests of future  
2 generations; and  
3

4 WHEREAS, the voices of a younger generation that desire to  
5 grow kalo are increasing every year, and it is the kuleana of  
6 this body to protect the foundation of, and lay the groundwork  
7 for, their success; and  
8

9 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force's 2010 and  
10 2014 reports to the Legislature outlined eighty-seven strategic  
11 recommendations organized in seven broad categories, noted key  
12 policy issues, and identified partner organizations and state  
13 agencies capable of implementing the recommended initiatives;  
14 and  
15

16 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force has helped  
17 strengthen relationships among kalo farmers, researchers, and  
18 state agencies, especially around issues of water and land,  
19 educational outreach, pest control, and the preservation of  
20 Hawaiian cultivars; and  
21

22 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force has  
23 supported, through policy and education, the growth of  
24 subsistence and small-scale kalo farmers as an under-represented  
25 but valuable segment of the agricultural industry; and  
26

27 WHEREAS, the Taro Security and Purity Task Force dissolves  
28 on June 30, 2015; and  
29

30 WHEREAS, an online petition recently initiated by the  
31 public has collected more than one thousand seven hundred  
32 signatures supporting retaining the task force in some form not  
33 yet determined to continue to advocate for taro issues at the  
34 public agency and legislative level and to facilitate and  
35 implement the Taro Security and Purity Task Force's  
36 recommendations, further highlighting the urgency and value of  
37 perpetuating kalo for the greater community; and  
38

39 WHEREAS, the one thousand seven hundred signatories  
40 supporting the continuance of a transparent entity to follow the  
41 Taro Security and Purity Task Force highlights the urgency of



1 increased protective measures and the value of perpetuating kalo  
2 cultivation and consumption for the greater community; and  
3

4 WHEREAS, the taro community wishes to establish a body that  
5 will embrace a broad constituency of taro growers while  
6 continuing to move toward fulfilling the recommendations of the  
7 Taro Security and Purity Task Force's 2010 report to the  
8 Legislature, especially the need to protect wetland taro lands,  
9 and that will enable the body to receive and distribute funds in  
10 support of the recommendations; now, therefore,  
11

12 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth  
13 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015,  
14 that this body acknowledges the positive impact of the work of  
15 the Taro Security and Purity Task Force and the role it has  
16 played for the taro growing community and cultural continuity;  
17 and  
18

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body supports the  
20 reformation of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force as a  
21 legislatively enabled body, should the taro farming community  
22 determine the need to do so; and  
23

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if reformed, the body is  
25 requested to continue to work with the Office of Hawaiian  
26 Affairs, Department of Land and Natural Resources, and  
27 Department of Agriculture to determine the most appropriate  
28 agency relationship; and  
29

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
31 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, President of the  
32 Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Chairperson of  
33 the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs,  
34 Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources,  
35 Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, and Taro Security and  
36 Purity Task Force.

